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REMARKS

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Claims 1 – 19 are presently pending. In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner rejected the Claims on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 1 – 19 of U.S. Patent No. 6,931,960. In addition, Claims 1, 7 – 11, 13 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Devenyi (2004/0237687), hereinafter ‘Devenyi’. Claims 2, 12, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Devenyi in view of Parsons (‘810).

By this Paper, Applicant has amended Claims 1 and 11 to more clearly define the patentably distinct features of the present invention. For the reasons set forth more fully below, the subject application is deemed to properly present claims patentable over the prior art. Reconsideration, allowance and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

The present invention addresses the need in the art for an improved approach to the mechanical conversion of rotary motion to linear motion, particularly for applications in which the required linear motion is very slow.

The invention is set forth in Claims of varying scope of which Claim 1 is illustrative. Claim 1 recites:

1. A leadscrew mechanical drive comprising:
 - a leadscrew having a leadscrew axis and a leadscrew thread with a nonzero leadscrew thread pitch; and
 - a leadscrew follower structure engaged to the leadscrew, the leadscrew follower structure including
 - a threaded insert having an insert thread with a nonzero insert thread pitch different from the leadscrew thread pitch, wherein the threaded insert is threadably engaged to the leadscrew thread,
 - a bearing in which the threaded insert is received and which permits the threaded insert to rotate about an insert axis, wherein the insert axis is angularly rotated from the leadscrew axis,
 - a bearing support in which the bearing is received, and
 - a preload structure which biases the insert thread against the leadscrew thread, said preload structure further comprising a spring in the form of a dished washer that applies a preload force to the insert.
- (Emphasis added.)

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The prior art does not teach, disclose or suggest the invention as presently claimed. That is, the prior art does not teach, disclose or suggest a leadscrew mechanical drive with a spring-loaded preload structure in the form of dished washer as presently claimed.

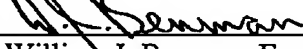
In the above-referenced Office Action, the Examiner cited Devenyi and Parsons and suggested that these references disclosed the invention as previously claimed. However, the claims have been amended to include a dished washer spring preload structure that is clearly not shown by either of the cited references. Accordingly, Claims 1 - 19 should be allowable.

New Claims 20 and 21 further limit the restraint of Claims 8 and 13 to a spring rod connected between the first and second threaded inserts. Inasmuch as this restraint arrangement is not shown by the references, and for the reasons asserted above with respect to Claims 1 and 11, Claims 20 and 21 should be allowable as well.

As to the double-patenting rejection over U.S. Patent No. 6,931,960, for the reasons set forth above, Applicant notes that the amendments made herein are such that the invention as currently claimed is patentable distinct from the '960 patent. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the double patenting rejection be withdrawn.

Reconsideration, allowance and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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